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IQH  
(RUTLAND)

EARLE







For Aunt Isabella  
from  
Louisa

Christmas  
1901





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*your obedient humble servant*

*Rufus Putnam*

# The Rutland Home of Major General Rufus Putnam

BY

STEPHEN C. EARLE, F. A. I. A.

*With Illustrations from Photographs  
by the Author.*

PRESS OF  
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BY STEPHEN C. EARLE,  
Worcester, Mass.

## PREFACE

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As frequent inquiries are being made for something descriptive of the Rufus Putnam Home, by the many visitors resorting there to pay their homage to the memory of that eminent patriot and statesman, this little brochure which was originally projected as a souvenir of the promised visit of President McKinley, is now offered in the hope of meeting, in a measure, the desire so often expressed.

S. C. E.

WORCESTER, 1901.





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## In Memoriam.

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A notable occasion for old Rutland was promised when in June, 1901, our honored and beloved President, the first citizen of Ohio, purposed to visit the Massachusetts home of the father of Ohio. The postponement of that visit, caused by his devotion at the sick bed of his wife, is alas! final.

A whole people mourns.

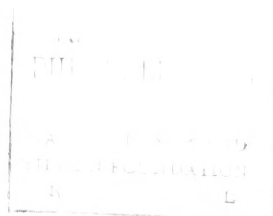
Senator Hoar voices our hearts in his fitting words uttered at the memorial services in Mechanics Hall, Worcester, September 19, 1901.

"We will place William McKinley in our Valhalla. He was a favorite of the people. He was a leader of men. He knew the people that he ruled. His power was of the sunshine; not of the tempest. Whether the great measures with which his name is inseparably connected were wise or unwise, righteous or unrighteous, must be settled by later and more deliberate verdict than ours. History will declare, I think, that he believed them right and wise, that he loved his countrymen and loved liberty.

"But in this hour as we stand by the grave of our beloved, we are thinking of the simple household virtues which make the whole world kin, and which, after all, are the strength of the Republic and the foundation of all human society. The pure family life, the love of one man for one woman, the sincere friendship, the unfailing kindness, the open heart, the modest bearing, the sweet and gracious demeanor—it is these of which our hearts are full. It is these that cling to the good man's memory here and hereafter.

"Peace to his ashes. The benedictions of millions of Americans are falling now upon his new-made grave like dew."

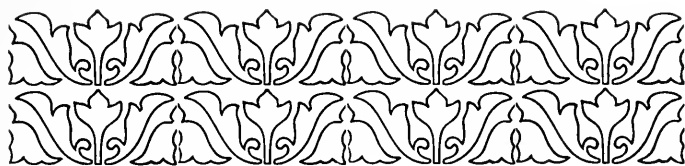






Rufus Putnam House from the South West.

Photograph by John H. Shaljian, Sept., 1898.



**A**BOUT a half mile west of the hill-top village of Rutland, in Worcester County, at almost the precise geographical centre of the old Commonwealth of Massachusetts, stands a substantial dwelling-house, typical of those in which a century and a half ago lived the leading citizens of the more important of our country towns. It was built about the middle of the eighteenth century by the tory colonel, John Murray, who, from a penniless and almost friendless boy, arriving here from Ireland as John McMorroh, became a wealthy land-owner and prominent citizen of Rutland.

He built several houses in this town for his children, when they married and left the paternal roof, and this house was the home of his second daughter, who married Daniel Bliss of Concord.\*

The house was confiscated at the close of the Revolution, and it is as the home of him who afterwards bought it, that it has an especial interest for us at the present time, for as recorded on the bronze tablet placed on its front by the Massachusetts Society of the Sons of the Revolution :

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\* See Appendix "A."

Here  
 From 1781 to 1788  
 Dwelt  
 GENERAL RUFUS PUTNAM  
 Soldier of the Old French War  
 Engineer of the Works  
 Which compelled the British Army  
 To evacuate Boston  
 And of the Fortification of  
 West Point  
 Founder and Father  
 Of Ohio.

In this House  
 He planned and matured  
 The scheme of the Ohio Company  
 And from it issued the call for the  
 Convention  
 Which led to its Organization.  
 Over this Threshold  
 He went to lead the Company  
 Which settled Marietta  
 April 7, 1788.

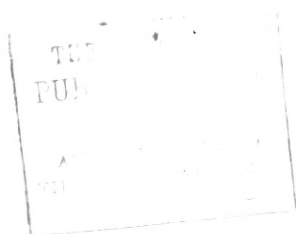
To Him  
 Under God it is owing  
 That the  
 Great Northwest Territory  
 Was dedicated forever to  
 Freedom, Education and Religion  
 And that the  
 United States of America  
 is not now a  
 Great slaveholding Empire.

With clear vision he saw that westward expansion was  
 to play a most important part in our destiny, having  
 proved, as has been said, "the great fact of our history  
 from the time of the Revolution to the time of the Civil





Tablet on Front of House . . . April 30, 1901.



War, which by successive waves, has reached Ohio, Illinois, Kansas, Colorado and Oregon, so that there is more good New England blood today west of the Hudson than there is east of it."

"This Rutland on the hill is the cradle of Ohio, the cradle of the West."\*

The Ohio Company was formed March 1, 1786, at a Convention gathered for the purpose, in which Rufus Putnam was the leader. But legislation was indispensable before Colonization could be undertaken, and Manasseh Cutler was dispatched to urge the needed action upon the Continental Congress.

As he was about to start for New York, in June, 1787, General Putnam met him in Boston and arranged with him the plan by which he was to proceed, to secure the all important enactment by Congress, of the great ordinance of 1787.

General Rufus Putnam was fifty years old when he, the inspirer, founder and guide, "led the Associates of the Ohio Company—the forty-eight immortals in their wintry journey through the snow of the Alleghenies and down the Ohio River to Marietta, where he resided until his death, on May 24, 1824, at the age of 86."

"This ordinance of 1787," says Senator Hoar, in his great oration at the Marietta Centennial in 1888, "belongs with the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. It is one of the three title deeds of American Constitutional Liberty"; and Daniel Webster, in his great 7th of March speech in reply to Hayne, says, "I doubt whether one single law of any lawgiver, ancient or

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\* J. L. Pearson's "Historic Town of New England."

modern, has produced effects of more distinct, marked and lasting character than the ordinance of 1787."

The stirring eloquence of Senator Hoar served to awaken Massachusetts and the Country to the forgotten significance of Old Rutland, as "the cradle of Ohio—the cradle of the West," and what so natural and fitting, therefore, as that this home of Rufus Putnam during the interval between his military career and his equally important peaceful campaign should be cherished and preserved as a shrine sacred to all patriotic Americans.

Moved by such sentiment, a goodly number of citizens, under the leadership of Senator Hoar, co-operated to secure the spot, and it has now been entrusted to the care of a corporation bearing the name of the RUFUS PUTNAM MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION.\*

This corporation, desiring to maintain the house in its pristine character and afford as well an opportunity for gathering a collection of the household furnishings of the time, has built in the rear a comfortable dwelling for the custodian and his family, and so far as possible, with the means at hand, restored the old house to its condition when it was the home of Rufus Putnam.

It is to be hoped that a generous and patriotic public will provide the means to restore some features, sacrificed in alterations made many years ago, notably in the architectural character of the front entrance, changes in windows and the sacrifice of some of the interior panelling.

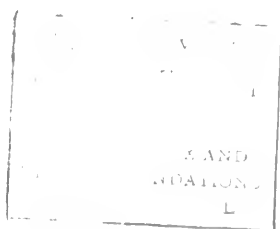
The old kitchen has been restored to its original size with the addition of a recess for a handsome old black oak dresser, bought in England for the place by Senator

\* See Appendix "B."



Front Stairs . . . April 30, 1901.







South West Parlor of Rufus Putnam House . . . March 26, 1901.



Hoar, and the old cavernous fire-place, bricked up for forty or fifty years, has been opened and furnished with a fine old set of cranes and utensils, another gift of Mr. Hoar.

There are many other interesting articles, presented by Mr. Hoar and others, which are appropriate household furnishings in the home of a well-to-do New England family of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

One of the most notable articles among Senator Hoar's gifts is a richly carved black oak canopy bedstead from Worcestershire, England, which now graces the southwest bedroom.

To fully appreciate the dignity of this old mansion and its builders, one must go down into the cellar by the solid log stairs, a feature common in the old Colonial houses, now rather rarely seen—and observe the massive stone arched chimney foundations.

Surely no one can fail to be impressed by the beauty of the site and its surroundings, with such pictures as are seen in the approach by the slightly curving road lined with great willows—the fine view of the village of Rutland from the eastern terrace, and from this same spot the lovely picture of Wachusett seen through a gap in the neighboring wooded hills; to which the little pond in the foreground adds the charm to the landscape which only a pretty sheet of water can give.

"But," says Senator Hoar in his great oration at Marietta, "what can be said which shall be adequate to the worth of him who was the originator, inspirer, leader and guide of the Ohio settlement from the time when he first conceived it, in the closing days of the Revolution,

until Ohio took her place in the Union as a free state in the summer of 1803? Every one of that honorable body would have felt it a personal wrong had he been told that the foremost honors of this occasion would not be given to Rufus Putnam. Lossing calls him 'the father of Ohio'; Burnet says 'he was regarded as their principal chief and leader.' "

He was chosen the superintendent at the meeting of the Ohio Company in Boston, November 21, 1787, "to be obeyed and respected accordingly." . . . .

The agents of the company, when they voted in 1787 "that the 7th of April be forever observed as a public festival", spoke of it as "the day when General Putnam commenced the settlement of this country." . . . .

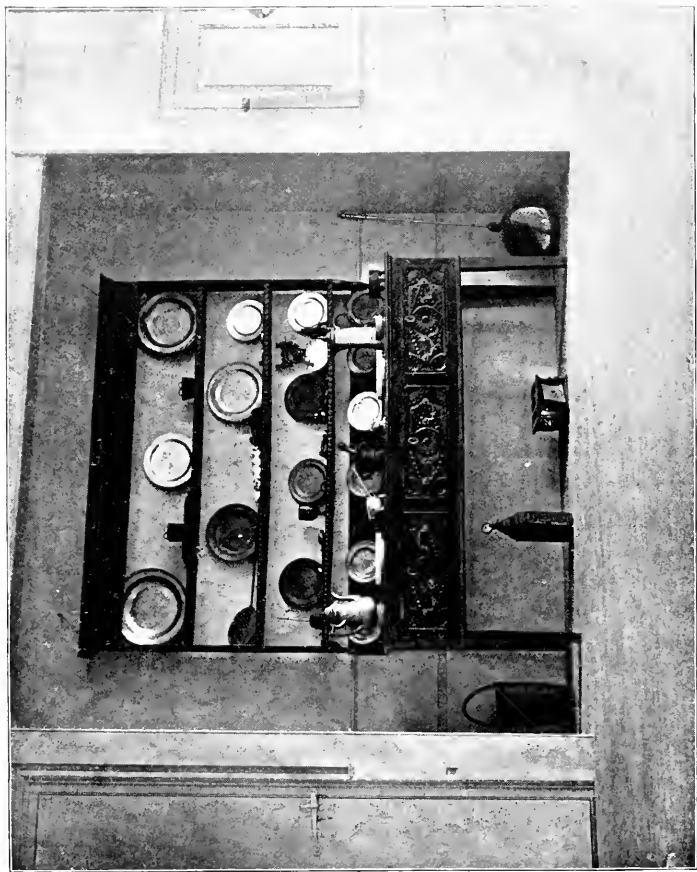
Harris dedicates the documents collected in his appendix to Rufus Putnam, the founder and father of the State. . . . .

"He was a man after Washington's own pattern and after Washington's own heart; of the blood and near kindred of Israel Putnam, the man who dared to lead where any man dared to follow." . . . .

We take no leaf from the pure chaplet of Washington's fame when we say "that the success of the first great military operation of the Revolution was due to Rufus Putnam."

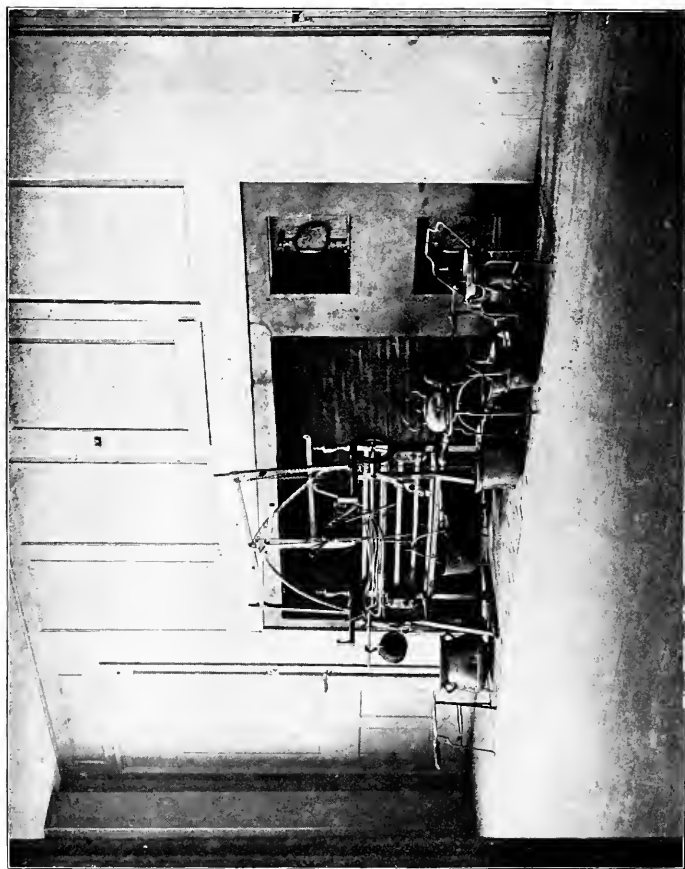


Oak Bedstead and Quilt from Worcestershire, England, April 30, 1901.



Old English Oak Dresser in Kitchen, Rufus Putnam House . Aug. 17, 1901.





Kitchen Fireplace, Rufus Putnam House . . . Aug. 17, 1901.





Cellar Stairs and Chimney Foundations . . . . 1901.



## APPENDIX A.

Rev. Daniel Bliss of Concord, the father of Colonel Murray's son-in-law, was a famous and eloquent preacher, and a friend of Whitefield. The sister of Daniel Bliss of Rutland married Rev. William Emerson, minister of Concord, a zealous patriot of the Revolution, and grandfather of Ralph Waldo Emerson. The following letter, which has not before been published, written by her second husband, Rev. Ezra Ripley, is interesting in this connection.

CONCORD, Dec. 8th, 1829.

Dear Sir

Yours of the 15th Octo. last, came to hand some time in Nov. last. I should have answered it without delay; but the family Bible containing the record of birth and death, being in the possession of a person far away, I could not obtain it. I must be as accurate as I can without knowing particular days. It is with pleasure I aid you with information respecting the person after whom you inquire.

Daniel Bliss Esq. was the eldest child of the Rev. Daniel Bliss late minister of Concord. He was born March —, 1740. He was educated at Harvard University, & graduated 1760. Mr. Bliss was designed for the Christian ministry by his parents, & was himself inclined to the profession: his natural talents seemed to point him to that sacred office. Soon after he graduated, he became acquainted with the family of Col. John Murray then of Rutland, whose second daughter he married. His connection with that family, who were *Tories* warped his mind on political subjects, &, very reluctantly, he joined the royal party. He read law in the office of Abel Willard Esq. of Lancaster, & in due time opened an office in Rutland, Mass., where he lived till about 1773, or 1774, when he removed to Concord, where he rendered himself very popular and useful. The lead-

ing men of the town urged him to join the cause of the country & liberty, & assured him of their support. They wanted such a man to take the lead in public affairs, which had then become serious and alarming. He convinced them of his friendship to his country, but told them in his opinion, resistance to Great Britain would be in vain & that all leading men would be treated as rebels. Besides he said it was a matter of conscience with him. As an attorney, (& I believe, magistrate) he had sworn allegiance to King George & to support his government, and he thought it would be perjury in him to join in opposition to the authority of the King and parliament. A little while before the 19th of April 1775, he went with his family to Boston, & thence to Quebec with the British. It was his belief that the Americans had courage, and would fight, but thought they would be conquered. Of this, that is courage to fight, he endeavored to convince the British officers, who visited him a little while before the memorable 19th of April, 75. The officers supposed the people would not fight; he urged a different opinion. While in this conversation, his brother Thos. Theodore passed by in sight on which Mr. Bliss said, pointing to his brother, There goes a man who will fight you in blood up to his knees. This prediction was verified; that same brother proved a very brave, though unfortunate officer in the revolutionary war. Mr. Bliss at Canada, stood aloof from powder and balls, to the use of which by man against man, he had a great aversion, but for a living accepted the office of Commissary.

At the close of the war he settled in New Brunswick, at Fredericton, where he continued til he died, I believe, Dec. 1813. Mr. Bliss visited the states repeatedly, & was very desirous of returning with his family to his native soil; but the measures of our government effectually prevented it. In New Brunswick Mr. Bliss was chief justice, as I believe, of the inferior court. What property he had in Concord was confiscated,





Road to the Rufus Putnam House . . . June, 1901.

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Rutland Village . View from the Rufus Putnam House . June, 1901.

& he never accumulated wealth. He was too honest to avail himself of the opportunity that offered, when Commissary, for which, he told me, all he got for it was, to be laughed at by the British officers.

Mr. Bliss was a man of a very active and sprightly mind, & very fluent & agreeable in conversation. He was a man of piety and practical goodness. Many troubles fell to his lot; & he never ceased to regret, that he could not return to his beloved native country. He was never a tory at heart, or in principle, but only through natural timidity, tenderness of conscience & a combination of circumstances. He was a firm believer in divine revelation & lived & died a practical Christian.

Mr. Bliss' oldest daughter married a British officer & still lives in Ireland, where also his oldest son lives, having joined the British army at Quebec. But this is not to the purpose.

I am sorry that I cannot be more accurate in dates. If I shall ascertain the day of birth and death in season, I will furnish you. I do not wish that my name should be mentioned as authority in what you may publish. As Mr. Bliss was the brother of my late wife, I may be thought partial; & you are aware that any man who was counted a *tory* & was an absentee, was very odious to the people. But it will be gratifying to me & many others, to have any just and honorable notice given of the person in question.

I am Dear Sir, your friend & humble servant.

E. RIPLEY.

Joseph Willard Esq.

N. B. Perhaps I ought to mention, that the celebrated epitaph on the grave stone of Jack, the negro, in our burying ground has been attributed to Mr. Bliss as author, & generally believed. I once mentioned the matter to him & he neither owned nor denied it. But as it has also been attributed to Jona. Sewall, then of Cambridge, I dare not be positive. Judge

Bliss was executor to the will of Jack, & he was cotemporary & intimate with Judge Sewall. It is not improbable that both of them had a hand in it. If I were sure that Judge Bliss was the sole author, I should think it proper to attach it to his character.

Yours,

E. R.

### EPITAPH.

God wills us free;—man wills us slaves.  
 I will as God wills; God's will be done.  
     Here lies the body of  
     JOHN JACK,  
     A native of Africa, who died  
 March 1773, aged about sixty years.  
     Though born in a land of slavery,  
     He was born free.  
     Though he lived in a land of liberty,  
     He lived a slave;  
 Til by his honest, though stolen labours,  
     He acquired the source of slavery,  
     Which gave him his freedom:  
     Though not long before  
     Death, the grand tyrant,  
     Gave him his final emancipation,  
 And put him on a footing with Kings.  
     Though a slave to vice,  
     He practised those virtues,  
     Without which Kings are but slaves.







View looking North East from the Rufus Putnam House.

Mt. Wachusett in the distance . Summer, 1901.

## APPENDIX B.

The first meeting of the subscribers to an agreement to constitute a corporation, to be known as the *RUFUS PUTNAM MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION*, was held at the office of George F. Hoar in the State Mutual Building, 340 Main Street, Worcester, Mass., April 13, 1901, pursuant to a call signed by all the Corporators and dated Nov. 13, 1900.

The following is the

## ACT OF INCORPORATION.

No. 9051.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

*Be it known*, that Whereas George F. Hoar, Henry A. Marsh, Elijah B. Stoddard, Nathaniel Paine, Samuel E. Winslow, Ledyard Bill, Burton W. Potter, Edwin D. Mead, Henry W. Putnam, Stephen Salisbury, Thomas C. Mendenhall, Rockwood Hoar, G. Stanley Hall, Charles A. Denny and Charles R. Bartlett,

have associated themselves with the intention of forming a corporation under the name of the

*RUFUS PUTNAM MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION*

for the purpose of holding and maintaining the homestead farm of General Rufus Putnam, of the Continental Army in the war of the Revolution, the Engineer who planned the fortification of Dorchester Heights and thereby compelled the British Army, under Sir William Howe, to evacuate Boston, March 18, 1776; who constructed the fortifications of West Point; the founder and father of Ohio; who planned in the dwelling house on said homestead the scheme and therefrom issued the call for the formation of the Ohio Company; who went therefrom, to lead the Company who first settled Ohio, landing at Marietta on the 7th day of April, 1788; insisting from the beginning that the exclusion of slavery should be a perpetual condition of such

settlement: who obtained from the Continental Congress, through his associate and agent, Menasseh Cutler, the Ordinance of 1787, thereby forever dedicating said vast territory and the six great states afterwards composed therefrom, to freedom, education and religion; and also holding any funds or other personal property, which may be hereafter contributed or acquired for the purpose of preserving and improving said homestead and farm, to be forever maintained as a monument and memorial of said General Rufus Putnam, and of the formation of said Ohio Company, and the foundation of Ohio.

All the income which may be received from said lands and funds to be applied, after defraying the expense of administering said funds, first to the maintaining said homestead farm, furnishing said house and keeping the same in repair, maintaining said homestead forever, furnishing said house and keeping a custodian of the same; and if there be any surplus, the same to be applied, at the discretion of said Association, to educational purposes within the town of Rutland, either by contributing to the expense of the public schools of said town, or towards maintaining other educational institutions, as may seem to said Association desirable and have complied with the provisions of the Statutes of the Commonwealth in such cases made and provided, as appears from the certificate of the *President, Treasurer and Directors* of said Corporation, and approved by the *Commissioner of Corporations*, and recorded in this office.

*Now, therefor, I, William M. Olin, Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, do hereby certify that said George F. Hoar, Henry A. Marsh, Elijah B. Stoddard, Nathaniel Paine, Samuel E. Winslow, Ledyard Bill, Burton W. Potter, Edwin D. Mead, Henry W. Putnam, Stephen Salisbury, Thomas C. Mendenhall, Rockwood Hoar, G. Stanley Hall, Charles A. Denny and Charles R. Bartlett, their associates and successors, are legally*

organized and established as and are hereby made an existing Corporation under the name of the

*RUFUS PUTNAM MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION*

with the powers, rights, and privileges, and subject to the limitations, duties and restrictions which by law appertain thereto.

Witness my official signature hereunto subscribed, and the seal of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts hereunto affixed this twenty-ninth day of April in the year of Our Lord, one thousand nine hundred and one.

WM. M. OLIN,

Secretary of the Commonwealth.

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*THE OFFICERS OF THE CORPORATION:*

President,	-	-	George F. Hoar.
Vice-President,	-		Elijah B. Stoddard.
Clerk and Sec'y.	-		Nathaniel Paine.
Treasurer,	-	-	Henry A. Marsh.

*Executive Committee.*

Samuel E. Winslow,	Ledyard Bill,
Charles R. Bartlett.	

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The By-Laws provide that the annual meeting shall be held in Rutland in October, and a semi-annual meeting in May of each year.



West Entrance . . . April 30, 1901.















